

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

I. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected independent claims 2 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatenable over U.S. Published Patent Application 2003/0050986 (hereinafter “*Matthews*”), in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,249,282 (hereinafter “*Sutcliffe*”), and in further view of U.S. Published Patent Application 2004/0064515 (hereinafter “*Hockey*”). Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner’s assertion that these claims are made obvious by *Matthews*, in view of *Sutcliffe*, in further view of *Hockey*. Independent claims 2 and 12 are generally directed to a method and system of pairing one or more live users within a community who have similar educational and/or general interests and then monitoring the communications between the pair. The present claims seek to provide a method and system that allows candidate users to enter profile information by selecting attributes from a predefined list but also by entering additional detailed information created by the user. As a result, at least a portion of the user’s profile data entered by the user is distinct from any predefined selections. The system then monitors at least a textual portion of the communications between the paired users, flagging any communications that contain inappropriate material in the text of the communications.

Matthews fails to disclose a method or system where a candidate user possesses the ability to enter any distinguishing information he or she desires. Furthermore, *Matthews* fails to disclose a method or system wherein such information may be used by the system to pair the candidate user with one or more other users that have interests similar to the information entered by the candidate user. Instead, *Matthews* discloses a system where a member table

contains the list of members and their attributes. See *Matthews* ¶ 30. Examples of such attributes set forth in *Matthews* are the member's name, member preferences, group membership, membership status, and member authorizations. See *Matthews* ¶ 39. As such, *Matthews* fails to disclose a method or system that provides a candidate user with the ability to enter attributes other than those predefined by the system. Moreover, *Matthews* fails to disclose the ability to search and pair users based on this unique information provided by each user. *Matthews* neglects to mention any monitoring of the communications between the users or flagging of such communications in any way. Accordingly, *Matthews* fails to teach, disclose, or suggest a method or system that pairs users having similar interests based on information entered by the user that has not been selected from a predefined list of attributes or a method or system that monitors or flags communications between such users based on such communications.

Sutcliffe fails to rectify the deficiencies found in *Matthews* and also does not disclose a method or system wherein a candidate user possesses the ability to enter any distinguishing information he or she desires and that is not selected in response to a predefined set of attributes. *Sutcliffe* also fails to disclose a method or system that uses such information to pair the candidate user with one or more other users that have similar interests. *Sutcliffe* also neglects to mention any monitoring of communications between users or the ability to flag communications based on the text within such communications. Instead, *Sutcliffe* is directed to a system that presents users with a preset list of characteristics. The user then selects characteristics that correspond to the user, as well as characteristics that the user finds

appealing in others. The system then matches users based on their respective selections. An example of the predefined list of characteristics is shown in Table 2 of *Sutcliffe*. *Sutcliffe* does not disclose, however, a method or system which provides the user with the ability to enter information corresponding to the user outside the list of predefined characteristics. Moreover, because *Sutcliffe* fails to disclose the ability to enter such information, it fails to disclose the ability to pair users based on entry of such information. Additionally, *Sutcliffe* is not directed to a method or system of monitoring communications between users in order to flag potentially inappropriate content transmitted by a user based at least in part on analysis of a textual portion of the communications. Accordingly, *Sutcliffe* does not teach, disclose, or suggest a method or system of pairing users within a community at least partly based on information entered by the respective user that does not correspond to a predefined list of attributes or a method or system of monitoring communications between such users and flagging potentially inappropriate communications based on the communications' text.

Hockey fails to rectify the deficiencies found in *Matthews* and *Sutcliffe* and also does not disclose a method or system that provides a user with the ability to enter information about the user that does not correspond to a predefined lists of characteristics. Nor does *Hockey* disclose a method or system that pairs users based on such information entered by each user or that monitors communications between such a pair of users by analyzing a textual portion of the communications. Instead, *Hockey* is directed to a system that attempts to digest and compare the internal parts of an email to other acceptable email digests in order to intercept potentially malicious emails. See *Hockey* ¶ 97 *et seq.* The system disclosed in *Hockey*

performs a mathematical calculation to determine how closely the digests of certain emails match the digests of other acceptable and unacceptable emails. See *Hockey* ¶ 106 *et seq.* *Hockey* does not disclose a method or system that analyzes and flags communications between users based, at least in part, on a textual portion of the communications. *Hockey* fails to disclose a method or system that either allows entry of user-defined information or pairs users based on this information. Accordingly, *Hockey* does not teach, disclose, or suggest a method or system of pairing users within a community based, at least partially, on user-defined attributes and information or a method or system that flags communications between the paired users based on an analysis of at least the textual portions of such communications.

II. Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, independent claims 2 and 12 are not unpatenable over *Matthews* in view of *Sutcliffe* and in further view of *Hockey*. The remaining claims depend from these independent claims, recite further limitations, and are therefore allowable in their respective combinations. Favorable action by the Examiner and withdrawal of the cited rejections is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned in an effort to discuss and resolve any remaining issues. Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1196.

[SIGNATURE PAGE ATTACHED]

Application No. 10/619,101
Amendment Dated Aug. 14, 2007
Reply to Office Action of Feb. 14, 2007

Respectfully submitted,
NELSON MULLINS RILEY & SCARBOROUGH, LLP.

/s Jeremy C. Whitley /
Jeremy C. Whitley
Registration No. 58,775
1320 Main Street | Suite 1700
Columbia, South Carolina 29201
Office: (803) 255-9764
Fax: (803) 255-9831